(b) if so, what were the main points discussed in the meeting and whether any action plan has been prepared in this regard;

(c) whether Cabinet has given its nod for 2500 model Government schools in the country;

(d) if so, by when they are likely to be started; and

(e) whether All India Students' Federation (AISF) has proposed for reforms in education sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has organized zonal and national conferences of Vice-Chancellors of Universities in the context of the Eleventh Plan. The main issues discussed pertain to improving teaching standards, research and examination system. The above issues highlighted in the Conferences have been taken into consideration in formulation the Eleventh Plan.

(c) and (d) A Centrally Sponsored Scheme to set up 2500 model schools in educationally backward blocks, to be managed by State Governments, has been launched by the Central Government during the current year. Proposals have been invited from the State Governments for being sanctioned subject to viability of such proposals.

(e) No such proposal has come to notice.

Setting up of special agencies for higher and professional education

2217. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) has urged Government to abolish the AICTE and set up special agencies for higher and professional education;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereon;

(c) whether the higher and professional education in the country needs special attention of Government; and

(d) if so, the likely steps Government proposes to take to improve merit and efficiency in higher and professional education?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) The Administrative Reforms Commission in its Ninth Report on 'SOCIAL CAPITAL' has recommended separation of professional education from the existing regulatory bodies and handing it over to specially created agencies for each of the streams of higher/professional education. These bodies may be called National Standards and Quality Council for each of such streams. The Commission further recommended that on creation of these separate councils the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) may stand abolished.

(b) to (d) The Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Higher Education has constituted a Review Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. Yashpal to review the role and functions of the All India Council for Technical Education as part of the reform process of higher education in the country.

Reduction in off-takes of foodgrains for Mid-Day Meal Scheme

2218. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL:
SHRI R.C. SINGH:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a reduction in the off-take of foodgrains for Mid-Day Meal Scheme by various State Governments during 2008-09;

(b) if so, the details of the allotment and off-take, State-wise during the year;

(c) whether the new distribution system adopted by Government is the reason for failure of the State Governments to lift the quota on time and thereby lapsing the quota, resulting in children getting less food; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): (a) and (b) Against the annual allocation of 28.60 lakh MTs of foodgrains for the year 2008-09 under the scheme, lifting of foodgrains by the States/Uts for the first two quarters *i.e.* for the period from 1.4.2008 to 30.9.2008 is 10.40 lakh MTs. The total unspent balance of foodgrains available with States/UTs as on 1.4.2008 was 3.04 lakh MTs. The total foodgrains available with the States/UTs during first two quarters was 13.44 lakh MTs, which is 47% of the annual allocation. The statement of allocation, lifting and availability of food grains during 2008-09 (up to 30.9.2008) is given in statement (*See* below).

(c) and (d) Due to unilateral modification of the guidelines for the lifting of foodgrains by the Department of Food and Public Distribution, the off take of foodgrains from the FCI godown was affected adversely in the first two quarters. However, with mutual consultation, now the quidelines have been further revised by the Department of Food and Public Distribution to remove these difficulties. Also, the quantity lapsed in the first two quarters have been revalidated for lifting.

Statement

Allocation and Lifting of foodgrains 2008-09 *during* 1.4.2008 *to* 30.9.2008 *(PY + U PY)*

Sl. No.	State/UT	Opening Balance as on 1.4.08	1st Qtr + 2nd Qtr Allocation	Lifting	Total Availability	% Annual Allocation 2008-09	Availability against annual
1	2	3	4	5	6=3+5	7	8=6/7*100
1.	Andhra Pradesh	60578.311	37870.72	38179.00	98757.311	171474.82	58%